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Army Chief General Naravane (2nd R) during his visit to forward areas to review the operational preparedness of troops | PTI

FRESH TALKS BETWEEN CORPS COMMANDERS ON STANDOFF TODAY

The militaries of India and China are scheduled to hold their fourth round of Lt General-level talks on Tuesday at Chushul on the Indian side of the LAC in Eastern Ladakh, to finalise modalities for the next phase of de-escalation and disengagement. Sources said India will urge China to exchange maps of the Western Sector border areas after disengagement is complete. P9

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot (C) with senior Congress leaders during a meeting with party MLAs, at his residence in Jaipur on Monday | PTI

Rebellion still on, but Gehlot shows strength

RAJESH ASNANI & RICHA SHARMA @ Jaipur/New Delhi

AMID revolt by Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday tried to show who is the boss by holding a Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting that saw a decent turnout.

While party leaders claimed a headcount of 109 lawmakers at the meeting, including allies, observers put it at around 102. The Congress has 107 MLAs in the 200-member Assembly and Gehlot needs 101 for a simple majority. For abundant caution, the veteran warhorse shepherded his flock into the Fairmount resort in Jaipur to prevent poaching.

Gehlot's show of strength happened in the presence of senior AICC leaders deputed from New Delhi — Randeep Singh Surjewala, Ajay Maken, K C Venugopal and state in-charge Avinash Pandey. Minister Pratap Singh Khachariawas said, "There is no threat to the government. We have the support of more than 109 MLAs and despite all attempts by the BJP, the Congress government in Rajasthan would complete its five-year term."

A resolution adopted at the meeting criticised the BJP and warned of strict action against those who work against the government, but did not name Pilot. However, the party kept the door ajar for the rebels with Congress spokesperson Surjewala appealing to them to approach the high command for redressal of grievances. "Pilot's demands have been negotiated by the Congress high command many times in the last 48 to 72 hours," he claimed.

In Delhi, party sources said Pilot has spoken to Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. He wants equilibrium in power-sharing and participation in decision-making. "Also on his wishlist are better portfolios for loyalists, the state unit president's post and 50% seats in panchayat polls," said sources.

Pilot's claim on Sunday of the support of 30 MLAs appears misleading. Observers said he does not have more than 15-18 MLAs. P9

Bengaluru gets stricter lockdown this time

7-hour window to buy essential commodities; Taxis, autos only for emergencies; No proposal to extend restrictions, says Chief Minister

ANUSHA RAVI @Bengaluru

A week-long lockdown in Bengaluru Urban and Rural districts will begin from 8 pm on Tuesday and this time around, the state government has made restrictions more stringent. While all establishments have been asked to shut, shops selling essential items like groceries, vegetables, fruits, meat, fish and animal fodder, are allowed to operate, but only for seven hours -- from 5 am to noon, till the lockdown ends at 5 am on July 22.

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, after a meeting with the Covid-19 task force, said that there is no proposal to extend the week-long lockdown.

While flights and trains already scheduled will be allowed to operate, no new rail and air services can ply. Those travelling to airport or railway stations have to produce their tickets, which will serve as passes.

Public transport will remain suspended, and hiring of autos and taxis will be allowed only for emergencies. Dining at hotels and restaurants has been suspended again, while takeaways and home deliveries are allowed. Places of worship will shut. Liquor shops too are prohibited. There will be no restriction on the movement of goods vehicles.

All state government offices will remain closed, except those dealing with Covid-related work and essential services, like water, electricity and BBMP. All central government offices will also shut except defence and its PSUs, public utilities like banks, post offices, telecommunication etc. P2

WHAT IS ALLOWED

- Essentials (5 am-12 noon)
- Banks, Post offices, Petrol bunks
- Healthcare facilities, pharmacies
- E-commerce services
- Pre-scheduled flights and trains
- IT and ITES with minimal staff
- Scheduled exams
- Construction (in situ)

WHAT IS NOT

- Public transport, Metro Rail
- Salons, beauty parlours
- Places of worship
- Liquor shops
- Dining at restaurants

BSY leaves it to DCs on dist lockdown

CM B S Yediyurappa on Monday allowed respective district administrations to take the decision on imposing the lockdown. At a meeting held with the DCs to assess the Covid-19 situation, he pushed for rapid antigen testing in emergency cases. After the video-conference, Dakshina Kannada and Dharwad districts opted for a lockdown for one week to contain the spread of the disease | P3

EXPRESS READ

'Real' Ayodhya in Nepal, says Oli

Kathmandu: Stoking a controversy, Nepal Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli on Monday claimed that the "real" Ayodhya lies in Nepal, not in India and that Lord Ram was born in Thori in southern Nepal. Oli was condemned by the BJP for his statement.

II PU results to be announced today

Bengaluru: The II PUC results will be announced at 11.30 am on Tuesday, said Primary and Secondary Education Minister S Suresh Kumar. Students will get their results on their mobile phones, while it will be up on www.karresults.nic.in 12 noon onwards, he said.

Travancore royal family, not Kerala govt, to manage Padmanabhaswamy temple: SC

KANU SARDA @ New Delhi

UPHOLDING the rights of the Travancore royal family in managing the affairs of Sree Padmanabhaswamy temple in Thiruvananthapuram, the Supreme Court on Monday resolved the decade-old dispute over the administration of one the richest temples in the world.

A two-judge bench headed by Justices U U Lalit and Indu Malhotra overruled a 2011 Kerala High Court order, which had directed the state government to set up a trust to take control of management and assets of the temple, and held that the family will continue to have shebait rights.

The entrance of Padmanabhaswamy temple wears a deserted look on Tuesday as devotees are not allowed entry | VINCENT PULICKAL

The top court ordered that the District Judge of Thiruvananthapuram shall head an administrative committee to manage the affairs of the Padmanabhaswamy temple till a final committee is constituted by the royal family.

"The administrative committee and the advisory committee shall do well to discharge all their functions including performance of the worship of the deity, maintenance of its properties diligently and in the best interest of the temple, and provide adequate and requisite facilities to the worshippers," the judgement stated.

The bench left it to the committee to decide on the question of unlocking Vault B, a large mysterious chamber in the temple which has remained untouched on account of the belief that its opening will spell doom for whoever opens it. P5

Google to invest $10 bn in India over 5-7 years

Google Chief Executive Officer Sundar Pichai on Monday announced plans to invest $10 billion (₹75,000 crore) in India over the next five to seven years to help accelerate the adoption of digital technologies in the country. P12

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